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Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 TRSE-00 L-03 SS-15
NSC-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04
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----------010065 112023Z /66
R 111840Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6152

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, PROG, APER
SUBJ: ORGANIZING FOR MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

REF: STATE 148782

1. EMBASSY APPRECIATES OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON REFTEL. WE HAVE SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS. THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT HAS GREATLY INCREASED ITS INTEREST AND ACTIVITIES IN MULTILATERAL FORA, AS EXEMPLIFIED BY FACT IT WILL HOST THE OASGA IN 1978, THE IDB BOARD OF GOVERNOR'S MEETING IN 1979, AND ITS EFFORT TO OBTAIN A UN SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT FOR THE 1978-1980 PERIOD. IN THE LATTER CASE THE GOB BELIEVES IT NOW HAS THE SUPPORT OF A MJAORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CAUCUS, ALTHOUGH IT REMAINS CONCERNED THAT JAMAICA MAY SEEK GROUP OF 77 SUPPORT FOR THE SAME SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT. THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS FOR INCREASED BOLIVIAN ACTIVITY IN THIS SPHERE. PROBABLY MOST IMPORTANT IS BOLIVIA'S INTEREST IN GENERATING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR ITS EFFORT TO NEGOTIATE A SOVEREIGN OUTLET TO THE SEA WITH CHILE AND PERU. SECONDLY, BOLIVIA STILL HAS DEEP ROOTED FEARS CAUSED BY THE LOSS OVER THE YEARS OF TERRITORY TO EVERY ONE OF ITS FIVE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. ALTHOUGH WAR TENSIONS IN THE REGION HAVE DIMINISHED RECENTLY, THE GOB REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT A POSSIBLE
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PERU/CHILE CONFLICT IN WHICH BOLIVIA MIGHT BE A VICTIM, AND IT SEES AN INCREASED ROLE AND PRESTIGE IN MULTILATERAL FORA AS ONE MEANS OF GENERATING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO PROTECT IT AGAINST ENCROACHMENT BY ITS NEIGHBORS. A SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT IN 1978-80, CONVENIENTLY COVERS THE ONE-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OUTBREAK WAR OF THE PACIFIC (1879) WHEN PERU-CHILE TENSIONS MAY RISE. FINALLY, THE MILITARY REGIME OF PRESIDENT

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BANZER WISHES TO IMPROVE BOLIVIA'S INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE FOR
A VARIETY OF REASONS, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS TO IMPROVE
PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN HIS REGIME, IN THE WAKE OF DECADES OF
BOLIVIAN POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND A GENERALLY LAUGHINGSTOCK
IMAGE ABROAD. CONSEQUENTLY, WE EXPECT THAT THE GOB IN THE
FUTURE WILL TAKE A MORE SOPHISTICATED AND WELL PREPARED APPROACH
TO MULTILATERAL ISSUES, AND IT WILL BE MORE CONCERNED WITH THE
POLITICS OF SUCH ISSUES, ESPECIALLY WHERE THEY ARE RELATED
TO ITS EFFORT TO GAIN A UN SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT. WHILE THE
GOB WISHES TO MAINTAIN ITS FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.,
WE CAN'T RELY ON AUTOMATIC BOLIVIAN SUPPORT FOR OUR POSITIONS.
WE SEE SEVERAL WAYS IN WHICH OUR HANDLING AND REPORTING OF
MULTILATERAL QUESTIONS CAN HELP ACHIEVE MAXIMUM GOB SUPPORT:

A. GIVEN POOR COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES AND SLOW DECISION
MAKING IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, GOB DELEGATIONS AND MISSIONS
TO MULTILATERAL FORA USUALLY HAVE DETAILED ADVANCE INSTRUCT-
IONS. ALSO, FOR THE REASONS MENTIONED ABOVE, THE GOB IS
LIKELY TO BE MORE ENGAGED IN VOTE-TRADING IN THE FUTURE.
THEREFORE THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE APPROACH ON U.S. POSITIONS
IS OFTEN CRUCIAL. IN A RECENT ELECTION OF A U.S. CANDIDATE
FOR A MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATION POSITION, THE GOB HAD ALREADY
TRADED ITS VOTE BY THE TIME WE MADE OUR REQUEST.

B. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF DEPARTMENT COULD INDICATE SPECIFI-
CALLY WHETHER INFORMATION CAN BE PROVIDED BY DIPLOMATIC NOTE
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AND BETTER YET THE TEXT OF THE NOTE SHOULD BE PROVIDED. ALSO
OF IMPORTANCE, ESPECIALLY WHERE SPEED IS REQUIRED, IS A SPANISH
TRANSLATION OF THE TEXT OF A NOTE OR OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION.
TWO RECENT INSTANCES EXAMPLIFY THE IMPROVED EFFICIENCY OF SUCH
A PROCEDURE. IN THE CASE OF A USG REQUEST FOR GOB SUPPORT ON
ECOSOC CONSIDERATION OF AN ILLICIT PAYMENTS AGREEMENT (STATE
146972) THE DEPARTMENT PROVIDED THE TEXT OF AN AIDE MEMOIRE
IN SPANISH TRANSLATION, WHICH PERMITTED AN IMMEDIATE DEMARCHE
TO THE GOB. IN CONTRAST, THE DEPARTMENT REQUESTED THE EMBASSY
TO SEEK GOB SUPPORT IN OPPOSING FULL MEMBERSHIP FOR PALESTINE
LIBERATION ORGANIZATION IN AN ECOSOC COMMITTEE (STATE 148786).
IN THAT CASE, GOB OFFICIALS ASKED (AS THEY USUALLY DO) FOR
AN AIDE MEMOIRE, AND LATER A DIPLOMATIC NOTE ON THE SUBJECT.
THE EMBASSY USED ITS OWN DISCRETION IN PREPARING THESE BASED
ON THE CLASSIFIED TEXT OF THE INCOMING TELEGRAM AND DID ITS
OWN TRANSLATION WHICH TOOK TIME ON A MATTER REQUIRING PROMPT
ACTION. WE SUPPOSE MANY OTHER EMBASSIES HAD TO DO THE SAME.
IT SEEMS MORE EFFICIENT TO US FOR THE DEPARTMENT, WHENEVER
POSSIBLE, TO PREPARE ONE TEXT AND TRANSLATION AND CONVEY IT
TO ALL ACTION EMBASSIES, AS IN THE CASE OF STATE 146972.

C. SIMILAR CONSIDERATIONS APPLY TO BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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WHICH THE DEPARTMENT PROVIDES ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. GOB
OFFICIALS WELCOME SUCH INFORMATION AND WE BELIEVE IT INFLU-
ENCES THEIR OWN VIEWS AND DECISIONS IN OUR FAVOR. HOWEVER,
SINCE FEW GOB OFFICIALS, ESPECIALLY IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY,
SPEAK ENGLISH, WE FIND A TRANSLATION NECESSARY TO BE EFFECTIVE
AND EMBASSY TRANSLATING FACILITIES ARE VERY LIMITED. FOR EX-
AMPLE, IN THE CASE OF U.S. VIEWS ON THE ILO
MEETING AT GENEVA, THE EMBASSY PREPARED ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE
A DETAILED BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM WHICH THE LABOR
MINISTRY GAVE TO THE BOLIVIAN DELEGATION. WE ALSO
RECEIVED, AS A RESULT, A WRITTEN RESPONSE FROM THE MINISTRY
INDICATING THAT IT HAD DIRECTED ITS DELEGATION TO COOPERATE
WITH THE U.S. DELEGATION. IT TOOK THE EMBASSY, GIVEN THE PRESS
OF OTHER WORK, ALMOST TWO WEEKS TO PREPARE THIS SPANISH LANGUAGE
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MEMORANDUM FROM THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT.
FOR SMALL EMBASSIES, SUCH AS LA PAZ, PREPARED, PRE-TRANSLATED
BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON IMPORTANT ISSUES IS MOST USEFUL
IN PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF U.S. VIEWS.

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 TRSE-00 L-03 SS-15
NSC-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04
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D. AS ITEM A ABOVE IMPLIES,BOLIVIAN DELEGATION MEMBERS MAY
BE RELATIVELY INDEPENDENT ONCE THEY ARRIVE AT A MEETING, AND A
DIRECT, PERSONAL APPROACH BY THE U.S. DELEGTION MAY BE VERY
FRUITFUL. IT ALSO WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR EMBASSY TO RECEIVE
MORE FEEDBACK ON HOW WELL THE BOLIVIAN DELEGATION COOPERATED.

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IN THE CASE OF THE BOLIVIAN ILO DELEGATION, WE HAVE NO FEED-
BACK ON WHETHER THEY WERE HELPFUL OR NOT.

2. WE REALIZE THESE SUGGESTIONS PROBABLY IMPLY ADDITIONAL
WORK AT THE DEPARTMENT LEVEL, FOR TRANSLATION FOR
INSTANCE. HOWEVER, INCREASED ABILITY TO CONVEY USG VIEWS IN
TIMELY, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT FASHION, WOULD JUSTIFY THIS
IN LIGHT OF DEPARTMENT'S INCREASED EMPHASIS ON
MULTILATERAL MATTERS.

3. FINALLY, IN VIEW OF BOLIVIA'S HOSTING OF THE 1978 OASGA,
THE 1979 IDB BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING, AND POSSIBILITY OF ITS
OBTAINING A UN SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT, WE BELIEVE THAT SOME
INCREASED USG RESPONSIVENESS TO BOLIVIAN CONCERNS IN INTERNA-
TIONAL FORA IS JUSTIFIED IN RETURN FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR US,
TAKING INTO ACCOUNT OF COURSE THAT BOLIVIA ITSELF IS OF
MINOR IMPORTANCE TO U.S. STRATEGIC INTERESTS. A CONSIDERABLY
MORE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE HAS ALREADY BEEN DEMONSTRATED BY
THE U.S. IN THE INTERNATIONAL TIN COUNCIL IN RECENT MONTHS,
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AND WE BELIEVE THAT A SIMILAR COOPERATIVE, FRANK, AND FORTH-
COMING APPROACH IN OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS VIS-A-VIS
BOLIVIA WILL PAY DIVIDENDS.
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